

Congressman Elijah E. Cummings

July 17, 2002

7th Congressional District of Maryland
1632 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-4741 (202) 225-3178 fax

*A message from
Congressman Elijah E. Cummings*



It is both a privilege and honor to represent you in the United States Congress. While serving you, I will continue outreach efforts to further inform you of legislative action in Congress. I welcome your advice. Government "by the people" is the cornerstone of my legislative philosophy.

*Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress*

**Congressman Elijah
Cummings' District Offices:**

3000 Druid Park Drive
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 367-1900
(410) 367-5331 fax

7131 Liberty Road, Suite 202
Baltimore, MD 21207
(410) 496-2010
(410) 496-2015 fax

754 Frederick Road
Catonsville, Maryland 21228
(410) 719-8777
(410) 455-0110 fax

Congressman Cummings Earns an "A" from NAACP for 2001-2002 Congressional Civil Rights Voting Record

Congressman Cummings received an "A" on the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's Legislative Report Card released this month. Maryland's U.S. Senators, Paul Sarbanes and Barbara Mikulski, also received the NAACP's highest rating.

The Association's legislative report cards evaluate Senators and Members of Congress on their support for key civil rights initiatives during 2001 and 2002, including education, access to healthcare, tax equity and human rights.

"I am honored to have received an 'A' on NAACP's legislative report card," Congressman Cummings said. "I came to Congress with a commitment to assuring that all people receive equal justice and equal treatment under the law."

In addition to supporting the NAACP's positions, Congressman Cummings has sponsored and supported civil rights legislation in the 107th Congress including:

* **The Congressional Resolution on Voting Rights, H.R. 139**, to guard against minority vote dilution and disfranchisement, intimidation at the polls, denial of any eligible person from voting; and the reaffirmation of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The legislation instructs the United States Commission on Civil Rights to compile data and investigate reports of voting irregularities arising out of the 2000 presidential election, and to report on them to Congress and the Department of Justice. The measure would also instruct the

President and the Attorney General to make the enforcement of the nation's Voting Rights laws a national priority.

* **The Racial Profiling Prohibition Act of 2001, H.R. 1907**, which would prohibit the use of racial profiling when enforcing State laws regulating highways that receive federal funds.

* **The Local Law Enforcement Act Hate Crimes Prevention Act, H.R. 1343**, which would extend the jurisdiction to prosecute hate-motivated crimes and provide funds for state and local governments to assist in prosecuting these crimes.

* **The Accuracy in Judicial Administration Act of 2001, H.R. 321**, which would provide a temporary moratorium on carrying out the death penalty to assure that persons who are able to prove their innocence through DNA evidence are not executed.

Government Reform Committee Adopts the Congressman's Amendment to Homeland Security Department Bill

Insisting that the nation's homeland security efforts should not eliminate the war on drugs, Congressman Cummings joined Congressman Mark Souder (R-IN) on July 11 in successfully sponsoring an amendment designating an Assistant Secretary for Narcotics Interdiction within the proposed new U.S. Homeland Security Department.

The amendment passed during the full House Government Reform Committee mark-up of H.R. 5005, "The Homeland Security Act of 2002."

Homeland Security (from page 1)

Congressman Cummings said, "As we are learning more about the links between drug trafficking, domestic criminal activities, and the financing of terrorist activities overseas, the need for an Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security in charge of drug interdiction will be vital."

Under the Homeland Security Department bill, several federal agency functions currently involved with drug interdiction—including duties performed in the Department of Defense, U.S. Customs Service, the Border Patrol and the Coast Guard—would be moved to the new Homeland Security Department.

The movement of these border law enforcement agencies into a new Department of Homeland Security would make the department the preeminent drug interdiction agency in the federal government.

"In Baltimore, as well as in many other cities across the nation, drug abuse is the number one problem faced by many Americans. We must not forget that illegal drugs kill nearly 20,000 Americans each year, which amounts to a large-scale chemical attack on American cities, suburbs, and rural areas" Congressman Cummings said.

Twenty Million Federal Employees to Gain Opportunity to Secure Long Term Care

As a result of legislation originally introduced by Congressman Cummings, 20 million federal employees are now eligible to enroll in a Long Term Care Insurance Program. The program will allow federal employees to purchase insurance that will help pay for long term care services at home, in a nursing home or in an assisted living facility.

Congressman Cummings introduced the original legislation that was later incorporated into *The Long Term Care Security Act (H.R. 4040)* during the 106th Congress. The legislation was passed by both Houses and signed into law by President Clinton in September 2000.

According to the 2002 *MetLife Mature Market Institute Survey of Nursing Home and Home Care Costs*, the cost of a nursing home is currently \$52,196 annually, while the cost of an assisted living facility is \$25,908 per year.

"Long term care costs are usually not covered by health insurance or Medicare. In addition, costs are rising substantially every year," Congressman Cummings said. "This program will help federal employees pay their long term care costs when they need that care in the future."

Most long term care is not covered by Medicare or health insurance programs. With inflation, nursing home costs have been rising at about 5% a year. At this rate, the cost of nursing home care (for a semi-private room) in 2032 is expected to be \$190,600 a year.

Under the newly introduced program, eligible individuals will be able to purchase long-term care insurance coverage at a lower group rate. Those eligible for the federal long term care insurance program include federal employees, postal employees, members of the uniformed services, federal retirees and qualified relatives (spouses, adult children and parents). Open enrollment will continue until December 31, 2002.

For more information on the program, visit <http://www.ltcfeds.com> or call 1-800-LTC-FEDS (1-800-843-3337) or 1-800-843-3557 (TDD for hearing impaired).

Baltimore's Head Start Receives an \$848,670 Increase in Annual Grant

Congressman Cummings has announced that the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore City will receive a federal grant of \$27 million for continued support of the city's Head Start program. This year's total grant of \$27,239,041 is \$848,670 higher than last year's allocation from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The increase came through the urging of Congressman Cummings, who worked with Senators Paul S. Sarbanes and Barbara A. Mikulski and Congressman Benjamin L. Cardin, to support the federal appropriations that fund the grant. Head Start is a comprehensive child development program which aims to prepare children of low-income families for school.

The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Children, Youth and Families.

In Baltimore, Head Start is administered through 14 agencies, including the YMCA, Johns Hopkins, Union Baptist Church and Catholic Charities. This federal grant to Baltimore City will serve a total of 3,419 preschoolers between the ages of 3 and 4, adding 100 new students to the current program.

"The increased allocation will allow Head Start to open its doors to 100 more children, who will now be given the opportunity to gain basic skills before entering kindergarten," Congressman Cummings said.

Initially, Baltimore City's Head Start will receive \$10,057,952, which is 42% of the total grant. The remaining portion will be disbursed shortly before June 2003. In addition to expanding the program to more students, the grant will provide resources to expand Head Start's full time program.
